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FM USOFFICE PRISTINA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6283
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0756
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PRISTINA 000576

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DEPT FOR DRL, INL, EUR/SCE, AND EUR/SSA, NSC FOR BRAUN,
USUN FOR DREW SCHUFLETOWSKI, USOSCE FOR STEVE STEGER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/07/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [UNMIK](#) [YI](#)

SUBJECT: KOSOVO: NEGOTIATION TEAM RECEPTIVE TO POST-UNMIK
INTERNATIONAL CIVILIAN MISSION PLANNING

Classified By: COM PHILIP S. GOLDBERG FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

11. (C) SUMMARY: In response to an invitation from President Fatmir Sejdiu, COM and Torbjorn Sohlstrom, the head of the EU mission in Kosovo, briefed the Kosovo negotiating team July 5 on initial thinking on a post-status, post-UNMIK international civilian mission. They stressed that any future international presence would be a "clean break from UNMIK" and have a "different mission." COM added that the more the Kosovo government demonstrates capacity and performance on standards in the current period, the stronger our case for a light follow-on mission. Sohlstrom told the negotiating team that while any future international presence in Kosovo will be based on a UNSC resolution, the EU believed it should also be shaped by discussions with the Kosovo government. President Fatmir Sejdiu stated that he has always been in favor of a continued, but smaller, international civilian presence in Kosovo after UNMIK departs. Prime Minister Agim Ceku responded that he hoped that when UNMIK leaves, most of its current competencies would be given to the Kosovo government. END SUMMARY.

12. (SBU) COM and the head of the EU Liaison Office Torbjorn Sohlstrom briefed the six-member Kosovo final status negotiating team July 5 on initial thinking on the follow-on international civilian mission after a decision on Kosovo's status. (NOTE: The Kosovo negotiating team, or "Unity Team," consists of President Sejdiu, Prime Minister Agim Ceku, Kosovo Assembly president Kole Berisha, opposition leaders Hashim Thaci and Veton Surroi, and coordinator Blerim Shala. Also at the meeting were Sejdiu's advisors Skender Hyseni and Muhamet Hamiti, Minister for Environmental and Spatial Planning Ardian Gjini, EU Liaison Mission advisor Ben Crampton and PolOff. END NOTE). According to Sohlstrom, Veton Surroi had insisted the heads of the EU and USOP liaison office brief the entire negotiating team rather than the political sub-working group due to the importance of this subject.

13. (C) COM started by assuring the Unity Team that the U.S. would play a strong role in implementing any agreement, as well as continuing with assistance programs to develop capacity in the judicial and other areas. At the same time,

COM stressed EU and USG agreement that the future international presence be a clean break from UNMIK and that it will be different in size and scope from UNMIK. COM recognized that this was an important political optic for the Kosovo side in selling the international community presence to its population. COM noted that there are countries that will be asked to support the final status agreement that question the capacity of the Kosovo government to fulfill its obligations thereunder. Therefore, he continued, the more the government can do to implement the Standards for Kosovo prior to final status, the more we will be able to sell a light follow-on mission.

¶4. (C) President Sejdiu stated that he has always been in favor of a continued, but smaller, international presence in Kosovo after UNMIK departs. Sejdiu noted that an experts group led by Minister for Environmental and Spatial Planning Ardan Gjini is currently drafting a letter from the entire negotiating team inviting a follow-on international presence after UNMIK's mandate expires. Gjini told those present that his strategy group is working on a draft letter (forwarded to EUR/SCE) from the negotiating team to the Contact Group, the OSCE and NATO describing the achievements of the Kosovo government, its vision of an independent Kosovo and its ideas about a future international presence here. The Kosovo government envisions a smaller number of international personnel -- mainly from EU countries and the United States -- but Gjini quickly added that Pristina does not wish to get into a bargaining session concerning this. He added the Kosovo government hoped this letter will help in the final status negotiating process. COM stated that the government's proposal for such a letter would show the Kosovo government's commitment to implementing the final status agreement and that Kosovo buy-in would be essential in making the

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arrangement work. He emphasized again that the USG was committed -- with its allies in the EU, the OSCE and NATO -- to be very much a part of the implementation effort.

¶5. (C) Torbjorn Sohlstrom, the head of the EU liaison mission in Kosovo, told the negotiating team that the EU has begun to intensify its post-status planning and that this intensified effort will become more visible and its discussions with the Kosovo government more concrete. He added that although the future international presence will be based on a UNSC resolution, the EU also wants it to be based on prior discussions with the Kosovo government. He enumerated five components the EU sees will comprise the future international presence in Kosovo: joint capacity building through assistance programs, including a proposed donor's conference shortly after status; a continuing NATO military presence; the OSCE mission; the EU-led police and justice mission; and an international office mandated to ensure implementation of the status agreement. Sohlstrom said this international office will differ crucially from the current UNMIK mission because it will be much more limited in size, scope and power and it will be developed by the international community together with the Kosovo government.

¶6. (C) Prime Minister Agim Ceku then asked several questions. Who, he wondered, would be in charge during any interim period between the determination of final status and the setting up of this new international office. He also asked who is planning the follow-on NATO presence and asked that the Kosovo government be involved in this planning too. (NOTE: He specifically asked that the name of follow-on international civilian presence not contain the word "mission" so as to make a cleaner break with UNMIK and similarly that the follow-on NATO presence be renamed along the lines of NATO's "Headquarters" in Macedonia and Albania. END NOTE.). He said there should be a sixth component to the future international presence in Kosovo, the proposed international administrator for Mitrovica. He concluded with a request that when UNMIK departs, most of its current competencies be transferred to the Kosovo government, and not

the follow-on international civilian presence.

¶7. (C) In response, COM reminded Ceku that NATO planning, although linked to the current effort, is on a separate planning and decision track. On competencies, COM remarked that the prime minister might want to keep in mind the adage to "be careful for what one wishes for because it might come true." The international community fully expects Kosovars to take responsibility for the bulk of running their own affairs.

¶8. (C) COMMENT: This meeting showed that the Kosovo government too has given some thought to the UNMIK follow-on mission and is anxious to contribute to its success. Sejdiu, Ceku and others in the government understand that selling a continued international presence to a population yearning for independence will be politically sensitive. Conspicuously absent during the meeting was any response from the two opposition members of the negotiating team present for the briefing. They, especially Hashim Thaci from the Democratic Party of Kosovo, have the ability to make the planning for any post-UNMIK international civilian presence more difficult by making it a domestic political issue.

¶9. (U) U.S. Office Pristina clears this cable for release in its entirety to U.N. Special Envoy for Kosovo Martti Ahtisaari.
GOLDBERG